Reflections on War and the final cessation of all Hostility.

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SERMON

PREACHED BEFORE THE

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,

ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 1800,

BEING THE DAY APPOINTED

FOR A

GENERAL FAST.

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MDCCC.

As to war, if it be the means of wrong and violence, it is the ſole means of juſtice amongſt nations.

Burke's two Letters on the propoſals for Peace with the Regicide Directory of France, London 1796, *p.* 109.

Οὗτοι δικάζει ταῦτα μαρτύρων ὕπο
Ἄρης· τὸ νεῖκος δ' ἐκ ἐν ἀργύρᾳ λαβῇ
Ἔλυσεν· ἀλλὰ πολλὰ γίνεται πάρος
Πεσήματ' ἀνδρῶν, κἀπολακτισμοὶ βίᾳ.

ÆSCHYL. SUPPL. 941.

A

SERMON, &c.

ISAIAH ii. 4.

He ſhall judge among the nations, and ſhall rebuke many people: and they ſhall beat their ſwords into ploughſhares, and their ſpears into pruning hooks: nation ſhall not lift up ſword againſt nation, neither ſhall they learn war any more.

THE calamity of war has been often, and with good reaſon, deplored. It is a great calamity; a calamity made for tears and wringing of hands. It is juſtly claſſed with the other two ſcourges of the earth, famine and peſtilence. Sometimes of the three, one comes alone, and it is enough, when ſeparate, for woe: but the two are ſometimes to be ſeen riding to-

gether in war's chariot. We have it upon judgment's record, that before a marching army a land has been, as the garden of Eden, behind it a deſolate wilderneſs*.

Yet in our laments for ſuch a calamity, as in other caſes, where our tears do, or are ready to fall, it will be neceſſary, after yielding for a while to the heart's movement, to call our reaſon to our aid to ſave the honour of our reaſon. We then ſuffer no diſparagement or loſs. Our pity ſhall then not be our weakneſs; it ſhall have it's purgation by this tragic ſcene. True pity is ever, after it's exerciſe, grave and thoughtful; it braces the mind, not to complaint, but to acquieſcence; it ever leads to ſober, humble meditation.

That pity, which terminates in querulous invective, is but hypocriſy's pity. In this inſtance, if we ſigh over war's miſeries, let our compaſſion be the true, let it lead us to ſerious reflection on the ways of Providence, who has appointed no umpire in nations' quarrels, but the ſword, no deciſion of their wrong, but the battle's.

Let us begin our reflections by bringing before our view the ſurface of the globe, we

* Joel ii. 3.

we live on. We can eaſily conceive the map ſpread out before us. And, as we look upon it, it is cut, we obſerve, into diſtinct, though irregular portions by lines, which ſeem to go round them, as a girdle, or a plough's furrow. Of what ſort theſe lines are, is not material to our preſent thoughts. They are the boundaries, which incloſe and ſeparate nations. They are, ſome of them, the frontier, which nature has appeared to provide, and ſome of them the barriers, which the ſkill of man has made with nature's help. It is of more importance here to conſider, that theſe diſtinct portions of the earth, ſo bounded and divided, are, if we may be allowed the language, the ſeparate neſts, the ſeparate encampments of the human race, and that within theſe ſtations, men are as much apart from each other, as other animals are, by a difference in their ſpecies. Some of the circumſtances, which have occaſioned this ſeparation are doubtleſs ſuch, as muſt ever ariſe from the brute part of our conſtitution, from that, in which we participate with our fellow animals, from the principle, which ever makes us fear want, pain, and danger, and which is

greedy, aſpiring, and jealous. But theſe and all the other cauſes, whatever they are, may drop from us, at preſent, without loſs. It is clear that men, though brethren, are by theſe barriers as much ſeparated from each other, as the feathered tribe in the branches of the foreſt, from the deer, which range below, as the flock on the mountain's ſide, from the herd in the paſture of the valley.

As we are looking on the earth's map, thus parcelled and cut out into ſtates and kingdoms, before we part with this help to our thoughts, let us conſider, in what conſiſts the ſtrength of every people. If we were to eſtimate the ſtrength of a herd of animals, we ſhould of courſe, direct our attention to their number, to their ſize, to their look and ſpeed; we ſhould add alſo, to the ſum of their ſtrength the tooth, the horn, and the hoof. In like manner, if we take the account of a nation's ſtrength, we firſt conſider the multitude, the countenance, the ſtep, the make and muſcle of the limbs, and we then add the ſtrength, which wealth can purchaſe, the ſtrength, which man's ſtrength can give impulſe to, and his cunning give energy,

energy, the engines of ſlaughter and battery, the ſword, the bayonet, the cannon, the fortreſs, the arſenal, the reſiſting ſtrength of inert matter, the whelming might of waters, the deſtroying ſtrength of fire. This ſum gives the ſum of the ſtrength of every people, though in different allotments and proportions.

Here, as we look on the map before us, our reflections might take a terrific form. If all theſe different parcels of ſtrength, of man's ſtrength, and nature's, under man's controul, were collected into one, there were enough to go to war with heaven. We all know the pride and ſwell of ſtrength; we all feel it; and we cannot but be certain, that in ſuch a maſs, as this, there would be a ſwell, that in it's ſtretch would burſt the bands of every yoke, that would ſubmit to no dominion, not to God's. Strength only bows to ſuperior ſtrength, to nothing elſe. This, we ſpeak of, certainly could not obey a ſway, in which mercy was a principal ingredient. Happily for mankind, their name and ſpeech are not one. The attempt to collect all into one was early reſiſted and confounded by the interference of heaven.

He,

He, who meant to give mercy it's full opportunity, weakened the pride of man, by calling him away to the ends of the earth and ſettling him in different and in hoſtile tribes. He divided, that he might rule*.

Even in the ſeparation, the view is exceedingly tremendous. We ſee lying on the ſurface of the earth immenſe maſſes of ſtrength, not inert, or cumbered with their ſize, but quick and living, not torpid or lethargic, but moving, heaving, reſtleſs, never ſlumbering. The prophet Daniel in his viſions, had brought before him beaſts of terrible figure, as the emblems of ſtates and empires. And, in truth, it appears, that they are apter emblems, than at firſt might be thought. What other reſemblances indeed, can be more apt? Theſe living maſſes of ſtrength, nations and empires, lie couched on the earth's plain with their eye and aſpect ever on each other. They have the horn, with which to puſh, the wing, with which to fly to their prey, and the iron teeth, with which to break in pieces and devour; they have too, the roar of terror. They are active to aſſault and annoy;

* Gen. xi. 1—9.

annoy; they are greedy of ſuſtenance; they never have enough; of courage too, to ſuffer pain, privation, hunger; to be ſtruck, and not to yield, to be wounded, and not to faint. Neither are they ſinew or muſcle only; from their wounds and gaſhes can flow ſtreams of blood.

Theſe however, are not all the points of likeneſs. There remains one more for our thoughts of a nature ſufficient to appall them. The lion and the tiger in their roam for prey, in their chace of the herd, or in their fight, ſin not. Neither do nations ſin in their battle or in their conqueſt.

It is plain, there is no guilt to the beaſts of the foreſt, for they are under no law. Of the animal creation, it has pleaſed God to ſubject man alone to law and precept. Man is the only ſacred animal. The reſt are delivered over, in diſpleaſure, to be hunted, to be torn, to be trampled on, to be ſlaughtered, to be devoured by man and by one another. In every inſtance, excepting one, law and precept are provided to regulate human actions, to controul the exerciſe and impulſe of man's ſtrength. The exception is

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the caſe, where the ſtrength is employed in a nation's war, where the actions are the actions of battle.

The divine regimen bears on the individual's ſtrength. There is a law for or againſt the beatings of his heart, the movements of his eye, the words of his lips, the efforts and ſtrength of his arm. There is a law for or againſt every portion of his ſtrength, conſidered by itſelf, and alſo for or againſt the uſe of the whole, ſo conſidered. There is a law for his temperance, for his ſobriety, for his chaſtity, the nurture and preſervation of his ſtrength, and againſt his drunkenneſs, lewdneſs, intemperance, the waſte or frenzy of his ſtrength. The Scripture abounds with theſe and the like laws. But when the individual's ſtrength is conſidered, as blended and mixed in the whole ſtrength of the ſtate, of which ſtrength it is a part, he may give his hand, his heart, his wealth to his country's battle; he ſins not. No law touches on this uſe of his ſtrength. And, *where no law is, there is no tranſgreſſion* *.

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* Rom. iv. 15. 1 John iii. 4.

The divine regimen bears likewiſe, on the two portions of ſtrength, into which the ſtrength of each ſtate is divided, on the ſubject's, and on the governors', which are the two, which make up the whole maſs *. That the Scripture ſhould ſpeak more to the individual, than when viewed in either of theſe public relations, can be no matter of ſurprize, becauſe the ſituation of the individual has greater variety in it. Theſe are but two of the many relations of man. The many are the individual's. Yet perhaps, the Scripture ſpeaks more on each of theſe, than on any other. Theſe are of high importance in ſociety's mechaniſm; they reſpectively belong to the two great diviſions of every people, and are a ligature, which ties them together.

As to the ſubject's ſtrength, there is a law for his fear of the governors' authority, for his ſubmiſſion to all other law, God's and man's, political or religious law, for his reverence to the pure doctrines and inſtitutes of religion, as well as to the ordinary, and perhaps, not eaſier principles of juſtice; there is a law for his aſſiſtance

* See a former ſermon, entitled, *The Origin and Ends of Government*, preached before the Univerſity, Jan. 30, 1800.

ſiſtance to the governors' ſtrength, for contribution, for payments which are to ſupport and feed it. Nor is this all the chapter of law, to which he is held. He is bound, by undeniable inferences from theſe heads of law, not to defraud his governors' ſtrength, not to cheat in payments of revenue, not to be heretical, ſeditious, or rebellious; not to be guilty of any treachery to his country's ſtrength, not to drop any words, (for words can weaken and ſtrengthen, can heal and kill,) which may diſpirit his country, and encourage the adverſary; not to comfort or ſolace in any wiſe the King's enemies. Nay more, he is held to go heartily to battle with his governors, to burn, to deſtroy, to waſte the enemy's ſtrength, not neceſſarily to put on armour, but to be ready for the call to battle, to be in battle with them in his ſpirit, in his temper, in his prayers.

As to the governors' ſtrength, which is always the main fighting ſtrength of the ſtate, the ſtrength, which is uſually, put in array for actual battle, it is clearly exempt from all law on this point. There is none for it to obey, either in Scripture, or in juſt concluſions from it. It is indeed,

indeed, under a law, to hide beneath it's wings the trembling, unembodied ſtrength of the ſubject, to place in ſecurity the helpleſs, ſhapeleſs multitude, to diſtribute juſtice evenly, to guard the true principles of law and religion, to ſhield the poor man's mercies. It is under a law, not to be guilty of domeſtic oppreſſion, to do at home none of that evil, to which power is often tempted by the counſels of ſuſpicion, or perfidy. But it is under no law, as to engaging in war. It may ſheath, or unſheath the ſword at it's own diſcretion. It may aſſemble it's armies, which are a part of the government; it may point it's artillery, which are a part of it's ſtrength, according to the impulſe of appetite, to the view of advantage, to the luſt of ſpoil, to the feelings of hunger or affront, to the caprice of it's own rapacious nature.

When ſuch terms, as ambition, injuſtice, are applied to a nation's conduct in going to war, they are not in ſtrictneſs, ever true. Theſe terms ſuppoſe the exiſtence of a law, which is violated. We ſhall perhaps, hereafter ſee, in what ſenſe they may be applied to ſuch conduct. We now

only repeat the Scripture maxim; *where no law is, there is no tranſgreſſion.* There is no law for beaſts of prey, they cannot ſin, as ſuch.

The battle between nations may be eternal. And in fact, their hoſtility is eternal, though it does not always appear under the form and denomination of battle. Battle is but one ſpecies of warfare. It is indeed, the worſt, but if they ceaſe from it, there remains much other ſtrife, from all of which they never ceaſe.

A truce between nations will not be thought a ceſſation from hoſtility. It is as the breathing of the lion and the tiger after wearineſs in fight. They ſtill lie facing each other. Though the tumult be huſhed, yet the menace and the ſong of war are ſtill heard. Even the parley of words on theſe occaſions, is exceeding fierce. Have they ceaſed from hoſtility, whoſe ſpears meet in the midſt, though for wearineſs they do not ſtrike?

An alliance between nations to aſſail or repel a common enemy is but an unſocial, diſtruſtful union. It is as the agreement of the lion and the tiger to chaſe the ſame prey. In the common purſuit they

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are furious with each other; in the common yoke the one ſtruggles againſt the other. They aim, each of them, at little more than the gratification of their own appetite, and from miſtake, or miſapprehenſion, are ever ready to give up their object, and begin a brothers' quarrel. Nor are the uſual hoſtilities of peace wanting between them.

Peace is a charming ſound. Yet the magic of the ſound, like all other magic, has deluſion in it. There is but one peace, that will ever come to nations, in which the ſword will be turned into the ploughſhare, and the ſpear into the pruning hook, in which war will be learned no more. In the peace, we now can have, the ſword indeed, is ſheathed, and the cannon laid up, but it is the ſavage part only of hoſtility, which is gone; and, though that is the greater and the worſe, yet the other ſtill remains.

The peace, we now can have, is as the retreat of the lion and the tiger into their dens, to lick their wounds. In their pain, in the remembrance of their wrongs, they will ſtart up ever and anon to renew the fight. The one will echo back the other's howl.

howl. War is ſtill learned at home. The nations are each, engaged in healing and nouriſhing their exhauſted ſtrength for future warfare. There is much ſuſpicion, much hate, long memory of wounds, of pain, and loſs of ſuſtenance. In the very intercourſe of peace they are ſtill at ſpoil on each other. In the very barter and exchange of commodities, they are feeding their own and ſucking the other's ſtrength. If we travel in the other's land, it is not the journey of ſafety or comfort. We are afraid; we feel, we are ſolitary, not connected, not tied in one intereſt. We are ſtrangers, a word not much different in meaning from a foe, and in one language, anciently the ſame*. We have the heart of a ſtranger in the hoſpitality, we meet with, and which itſelf, is but the toleration of an enemy, and has required all the laws of pity and of honour to guard and enforce it. Our ears too, are aſſailed by menaces, which cannot be deſpiſed, either from their number, or the weight of their ſignificance. Their dread echo is always, at every point of every frontier. We paſs to each other, even in peace, through gates of

* Cic. de Off. Lib. I. C. 12.

of braſs and armed files, and we never fail to hear it.

The reflections, which have ariſen before us, will probably, ſeem to be of a moſt tremendous and fearful nature. And indeed, they are tremendous and big with fear. The eye of the mind perhaps, is unable to take in living forms of ſuch terrific magnitude, yet that, which can be fairly ſeen and juſtly imagined, is enough to caſt a ſickly hue over the ſtouteſt look. The prophet, after his viſion of the beaſts, *fainted and was ſick for days.* But our fear, as our pity did in the contemplation of war's calamities, may, by this ſight, attain it's purgation. After our tremor ſhall return a health and vigour, as after ſickneſs. We ſhall be led to further meditation on the plans of God, we ſhall find repoſe to our ſpirits in his contrivance, to ſoften down the ferocity of nations, to bruiſe theſe monſters to his yoke, to make the lion and the tiger play together, as lambs.

We before mentioned one method, which was early taken, as preparatory to this happy concluſion of the world's long ſtrife. It was, by breaking up the foundations of the firſt kingdom after the flood, when the

people

people were all one, and by ſcattering them over the earth in different communities. That kingdom had begun to match it's ſtrength with God's; and, had the deſign proſpered, had mankind become one ſtate, he, who ruleth in heaven above all, muſt ever afterwards have reigned in the character of the Omnipotent, not of Redeemer; he muſt ever afterwards have borne in his hand the iron rod of vengeance and indignation; he could never have ſhewn the other ſceptre, with which he wiſhes to rule, the ſceptre, which is ſtudded with gems of mercy.

This was the firſt contrivance of divine Providence, an act indeed, of wrath, but, as uſual with him, a puniſhment anticipating future advantage. Having ſplit the power, he could now give to each parcel or maſs, what he was pleaſed in one inſtance to call *the heart of a man*. We ſhall adopt the expreſſion; it is very compendious, and intelligible.

The inſtance, in which it occurs, is in the viſion of Daniel. *I ſaw*, ſays the prophet, *in my viſion by night, and behold, the four winds of the heaven ſtrove upon the great ſea. And four great beaſts came up from the ſea,*

ſea, diverſe one from another. The firſt was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made ſtand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it *.

The expreſſion is exceedingly beautiful. What is exactly meant by the plucking of the wings, it is not neceſſary to enquire with nicety. It was probably, the King's perſonal adverſity and ſuffering; the fading of his glory, not of his power, intended to tame his pride, to teach him mercy and righteouſneſs, to make his heart ſoft and tender, and above all, by a reign of mercy and righteouſneſs to infuſe the life blood of his heart into the empire, he governed.

The expreſſion is exceedingly ſignificant. We cannot indeed, perceive fibres and nerves, but we can perceive a general beat, a general feeling. We cannot diſcern fleſh, but we can diſcern a ſoftneſs coming over the mighty muſcles and ſtrength of a nation. Even through the iron ſcales, which clothe and fence a ſtate, we can ſee a movement ſpringing from the central

* Dan. vii. 2, 3, 4.

central point, which is the heart of the King, and radiating in every direction through every channel and vein to every extremity.

We will venture to ſay, how in the mercy of God to man, this heart comes to a nation, and how it's exerciſe, or affection appears.

It comes by prieſts, by lawgivers, by philoſophers, by ſchools, by education, by the nurſe's care, the mother's anxiety, the father's ſevere brow. It comes by letters, by ſcience, by every art, by ſculpture, painting, and poetry; by the ſong on war, on peace, on domeſtic virtue, on a beloved and magnanimous King; by the Iliad, by the Odyſſey, by tragedy, by comedy. It comes by ſympathy, by love, by the marriage union, by friendſhip, generoſity, meekneſs, temperance; by every virtue and example of virtue. It comes by ſentiments of chivalry, by romance, by muſic, by decorations, and magnificence of buildings; by the culture of the body, by comfortable clothing, by faſhions in dreſs, by luxury and commerce. It comes by the ſeverity, the melancholy, and benignity of the countenance; by rules

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of politeneſs, ceremonies, formalities, ſolemnities. It comes by the rites attendant on law and religion; by the oath of office, by the venerable aſſembly, by the judge's proceſſion and trumpets, by the diſgrace and puniſhment of crimes; by public prayer, public faſts; by meditation, by the Bible, by the conſecration of churches, by the ſacred feſtival, by the cathedral's gloom and choir; by catechizing, by confirmation, by the burial of the dead, by the obſervance of the ſabbath, by the ſacraments, by the preaching of the Goſpel, by faith in the atonement of the croſs, by the patience and martyrdom of the Saints, by the ſanctifying influences of the Holy Ghoſt.

The exerciſe of a nation's heart appears, in it's impoſing on it's own ferocity reſtraints, in it's ſubmitting to checks on the levers and limbs of it's ſtrength, in it's conſenting to be one of the aggregate commonwealth of nations, in it's conforming to a public, general law, though in ſtrictneſs, improperly called a law. It appears in the ſending and receiving of embaſſies, and in the forming of treaties of intercourſe. It appears in allowing the ſoldier to judge of the pleas of humanity,

nity, in not putting to death the priſoner taken in battle, in alleviating the horrors of the priſon, in healing the wounded enemy, in ſhewing the white banner, in ſigning of capitulations. It appears in appointing one alone to give the ſignal for battle, in committing to him the ſceptre, which is to heave, or preſs to quiet the nation's ſtrength*, in placing him aloft, upon a throne, that all nations, as well as his own, may ſee him‡, in hanging round his neck a chain of golden links, of links of every virtue and every grace; of courage, to let ſlip the dogs of war; of perſeverance, not to be battered down by misfortune, the enemy's threatenings, or the people's fears; of anxiety, to watch the paw and the ſpring of the tiger adverſary; of wiſdom, to judge of challenge and aggreſſion; of prudence, to chuſe the leſs of two calamities; of piety, to mark heaven's omens; of humility, to renounce the love of glory; of mercy, to renounce the love of blood. It appears in eſteeming him to be more virtuous, than other men, in ſpeaking of him with reverence and love, in hailing him, in ſacred and ſolemn forms, as

* See note (A) at the end. ‡ Note (B).

as the defender of the faith of Chriſt, in naming him, in prayer, as a moſt religious, gracious King.

Like the heart of a man, this heart of a nation inculcates on itſelf, what promotes the habit of it's virtue. It brightens the poliſh, it has taken. It cheriſhes the ſcience, law, and religion, by which it's ſoftneſs comes. It grudges not it's tenth to their prieſts and holy children. It eſteems their labours to be better, than agriculture's produce, or the loom's work. It provides for them the laurel crown, the linen robe, and white wand. It raiſes them to dignity; it places them by the ſide of the King for glory, beauty, and advantage, both his and their own.

It deepens the lines of the impreſſion, it has received. It goes to the temple before battle. It prays againſt the viſitation of the ſword, as a plague of God. It mourns over that, which it is about to take into it's hand. It prays for forgiveneſs of the breaches of the public law, it has conſented to be under, though not bound to ſuch conſent. In this ſenſe it prays againſt it's own ambition, injuſtice, and love of rapine. It appoints faſts before battle. It faſts

againſt

againſt it's own ſtrength; it weakens itſelf, and then, ſo weakened, lies proſtrate before the ſuperior ſtrength of God. It ſeeks, in this humiliation and acknowledgment, the anointing from above, before it deſcend on the plain to wreſtle.

Let us now attend to the concluſions, to which our reflections bring us. They are concluſions, as intereſting perhaps, as the reflections themſelves.

Let this and every other nation conſider, what is their duty in the preſent criſis.

What the heart of a nation is, we have perhaps, ſufficiently explained. And it muſt appear from hiſtory, and the deſcription given, that all nations, till of late, have had it. They have all, till our day, had it, differing indeed, in particulars, but agreeing in the general likeneſs. Even the fierce Roman republic, the moſt terrible of the beaſts in the prophet's viſion, *diverſe from all the others*, even that, which in it's legions uſed the people's muſcles, as iron is now uſed, had this heart.

A republic has ariſen, in our day, which has torn this heart out of it's own bowels. With blaſphemies and curſes they firſt

firſt mangled it, and then tore it out. The deed could not be done, but with the moſt dreadful laceration. The heart had ſhot deep with it's fibres into the ſoil, but by unceaſing labour, unwearied pains they at laſt, ſucceeded, and then caſt it out bleeding to the world—When to be replaced? Never, but by the ſteady purpoſe conceived in the heart of every other nation, to conquer or to die in the attempt.

This republic has tried to take to itſelf another heart, a heart, quite unlike the former, a heart, which cannot be deſcribed, cannot be looked on. It reſembles the heart of the hoſt, which is reigned over in Hell—How is this deſign to be prevented? Never, but by the ſteady purpoſe conceived in the heart of every other nation to conquer or to die in the attempt.

If the French republic is not conquered, it will tear out our heart, and put it's own into our boſom.

In this addreſs and warning we have ſpoken, what will perhaps, never reach the ear, it is meant for, and to a power, which it is not always ſafe to warn. Yet England has not yet learned to deſpiſe her prieſts.

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She gives a value, though not the full, for ſacred admonition. In what follows, we mean words for an ear, which is nearer to liſten, and is more quick of hearing.

Whence the heart of a nation comes, we have perhaps, ſufficiently explained. And it muſt appear, to what moſt awful obligations and duty are held all thoſe, from whom this heart takes it's texture and ſhape, our King, our Princes, our Nobles, all, who wear the badge of office or honour; all prieſts, judges, ſenators, pleaders, interpreters of law; all inſtructers of youth, all ſeminaries of education, all parents, all learned men, all profeſſors of ſcience and art, all teachers of manners. Upon them depends the faſhion of the nation's heart. By them is it to be chaſtiſed, refined, and purified. By them is the ſtate to loſe the character and title of the beaſt of prey. By them are the iron ſcales to fall off, and a ſkin of youth, beauty, freſhneſs and poliſh to come upon it. By them it is to be made ſo tame and gentle, as that a child may lead it. By them, and their fellows and brethren in other nations, are to be reported from ſea to ſea the ſounds, which iſſue from the throne in Sion, *the*

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judgement among the nations, and the rebuke of many people, the leſſons of the monitor Judge and teacher King *; by them are to come the glories of the reign of Jeſus Chriſt, when no iron weapon ſhall be found in any land, but the ploughſhare, and the pruning hook.

How ought they then to conſider, what their temper and conduct are; how ought they to reflect, that by miſtake, by folly, by rudeneſs, by bad example, by corrupt ſentiment, by falſe philoſophy, by hereſy, by impenitence, by contempt of law and religion, by any ſentiment or action, which is baſe, mean, or evil, they are foſtering the brutiſhneſs of the nation, keeping up contention and ſtrife throughout the world, encouraging war and ſhedding of blood, barring from God's mercy their fellow men, the poor, their own dependants, their own ſons and daughters, hindering the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt upon earth, delaying the reign of him, who died to ſave and bleſs the world.

How ought they to reflect on the guilt of ſuch conduct, which is not confined to one little ſpot or corner, but reaches and

* Vitring. in Iſai. ii. 4. xi. 4.

and touches by links, which go round the globe, the happineſs, the refinement, the peace, the ſalvation of all mankind now living, and of all future generations. How ought they to reflect on the bleſſing and reward of a contrary conduct, which is ever contributing to baniſh to their own place, all malice, wrath, jealouſy, envy, revenge, cruelty, which heaps *coals of fire* on every hard maſs, and from iron brings out gold, from braſs ſilver, from ſtones gems; the gold, the ſilver, and the gems, which form the walls, the gates, and the battlements of the laſt city to be built, the city of God and of his Chriſt.

NOTES.

NOTES.

(A)

THE antient titles of Kings and Heroes were βία, σθένος, μένος, ἴς, referring doubtleſs, to this exerciſe and effort of power, as well as to their perſonal puiſſance and valour in the field. The modern philoſophical deſcription of equal coarſeneſs and accuracy, though not of equal emphaſis and ſimplicity with the heathen's, is, executive power, but, which Chriſtian lawgivers, with a blameleſs fraud, have veiled under the milder names of excellency, or majeſty. They underſtood it's nature, but were too wiſe and too humane, not to dignify the awful privilege, and ſmooth the appearances of that, which nakedly conſidered, in the exerciſe and effect, is only brute ſtrength.

(B).

The inveſtiture of one or more perſons in a ſtate with the privilege of making war or peace at diſcretion is a proviſion in conformity to the law of nations, to which code it belongs, in order that nations may approach each other, after the manner of men, and come, as individuals, to conference and debate; in order further, that praiſe and blame may reſpectively influence the negotiating parties, ſtimulate to moderation and mercy, and diſcourage violence and cruelty.

It is however, worthy of conſideration, that in this inveſtiture an office is created, if not without duties, yet without reſponſibility to man. The law of the

ſtate makes the privilege diſcretionary. By the divine precepts alone, which may be ſaid perhaps, to preſcribe to all ſituations the general principles of juſtice and mercy, can duties be annexed to this office, and the reſponſibility can only be to God. Yet, admitting this reſponſibility, on account of the intricacies, which entangle the relations of ſtates to each other, on account of the uncertainty in the application of juſtice and mercy to intereſts, ſo complicated, and of ſuch large extent, on account too, of the difficulty in deciding, wherein the trueſt exerciſe of compaſſion lies, it ſhall not be a King's principal fault, in the courts of heaven, that his reign has been warlike. Sometimes indeed, the inſatiate ambition and remorſeleſs iniquities, which inſtigate and prolong a war ſhall be plain to all the world, as in the inſtance of the war, in which Europe is now engaged, begun and prolonged by the revolutionary rulers of France. Yet we may almoſt venture to ſay, in general, that war, though put under this appointment and regulation, is nearly allied, and for the reaſons given, to the other two plagues of the earth, famine and peſtilence, even in this important point, as to the blame of the author or agent. Thoſe two are, literally, the act and viſitation of God, and the ſword, though in the hands of man, is probably, to be ſo conſidered much more, than it uſually is.

We may aſk the queſtion; why may not man be employed for purpoſes of vengeance, as well as the wind, the flood, the drought, or the locuſt, and be equally without blame? The contrivance to uſe man's arm, as a mere weapon, to inflict puniſhment on himſelf, or his fellow men, or on both himſelf and them, is not impoſſible. We ſee and admit a like contrivance in the execution of criminal juſtice at home. Not ſo perhaps, when our feelings to their honour, or their ſhame, take an intereſt in the fate of nations. Yet the Scripture, which ſometimes claſſes together, as like miniſters of wrath, famine, peſtilence, and the ſword, is certainly ſilent as to the blame of the laſt. Will it be preſumption to ſay, that this ſilence gives an intimation of ſuch a contrivance? Nor are ſome expreſſions

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in Scripture without a meaning, which warrants the idea of ſuch a deſign. The ſhout of one battle is, *The ſword of the Lord and of Gideon* *. Babylon is *the hammer* of the earth †; the Aſſyrian *the rod* of Jehovah's anger ‡, and Media and Perſia his *armoury* §. A celebrated heathen government had amongſt it's firſt inſtitutions a college of prieſts, who were to devote it's enemies to the vengeance of the Gods, and to hurl the bloody javelin, not only as the firſt act of hoſtility ‖, but alſo in token of the character, in which it's legions were about to appear. Nor is the opening of the temple of Janus without an import bearing on this ſubject. To him, from whom originate all things, was war in a peculiar manner, by a diſtinguiſhed and momentous ceremony referred, as to it's mover and God ¶. Neither have heathens and Chriſtians, in all ages, done otherwiſe than confeſs by the conſecrated ſtandard, whoſe the armies are, it leads to the field. They admit, that they are the hoſts, of which God is the Lord, that their array is for heaven's purpoſes, not their own.

If then a nation's arm lifted up for fight, be only as the lifting up of a weapon, theſe concluſions force themſelves upon us; that the chief, if not the only ſecurity againſt the wanton or miſtaken uſe of the high diſcretionary privilege entruſted to the King is in his perſonal qualities, eſpecially, in his milder feelings and virtues, in his "King-becoming graces;" that the management of the King's will, in this point, is, in the ſame ſenſe, the ſecret act and operation of divine Providence, as the hiſs, which calls, or leads away the locuſt, or, as the controul of the winds, the waters, and the drought; and, that the proviſions deviſed in the

* Judges vii. † Jer. l. 23. ‡ Iſ. x. 5.
§ Jer. l. 25.
‖ Hooke's Rom. Hiſt. Vol. 1. p. 121—123. 8vo. Ed. 4th. London, 1766.
¶ Heyn. Excurs. V. in Virg. Æn. vii. Vol. 3. Ed. 4. Lond. 1793. Sir W. Jones's Works, Vol. 1. pp. 234, 235. 4to. Lond. 1799.

the law of nations, and above all, this heaven-deſcended proviſion in the King's being a man of wiſdom, mercy and righteouſneſs, are of the ſame ſort with thoſe, which are contrived by man's ingenuity and God's and man's mercy, to avert a calamity, which the caterpiller, or the elements ſeem to menace, or, when come, to ſhorten it's duration, and leſſen it's preſſure.

Let complainants on the ſubject of war, if they wiſh to be congratulated on having feelings, like an inſpired prophet's, learn to bound their complaints by his devotional ejaculation; *O thou ſword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be quiet? put up thyſelf into thy ſcabbard, reſt, and be ſtill* *. And let all, who call themſelves Chriſtians, remark the Apoſtle's exhortation; *I exhort, that firſt of all, ſupplications, prayers, interceſſions, and GIVING OF THANKS be made for all men; for Kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godlineſs and honeſty* †.

* Jer. xlvii. 6. † 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.